Amendments to the Claims: Please amend the claims as indicated.

1-29. (canceled)

30. (currently amended) A web server with integrated industrial automation functionality comprising:

a real-time operating system ~~operatively~~ installed on a web server computer;

a web server software system ~~operatively~~ installed on the web server computer;

the web server software system comprising a web server kernel and a plurality of interface-compatible software expansion modules installed on the web server kernel via a common interface protocol between each of the expansion modules and the web server kernel, wherein the common interface protocol is standardized for the software expansion modules such that the software expansion modules are integrated with, and part of, the web server software system, and are loaded, configured, started, and terminated directly by the web server;

a first one of the expansion modules providing server/client network communication;

a second one of the expansion modules providing real-time process control of at least one hardware component of an industrial automation system; and

the second expansion module interfaced to the real-time operating system;

wherein a network client of the web server software system can monitor and control over the network communication the industrial hardware component via the web server software system.

31. (previously presented) The web server of claim 30, wherein the common interface protocol comprises an Internet protocol that provides communication between the expansion modules as well as communication with the client; and wherein communication between the kernel and the expansion modules is standardized on the Internet protocol; whereby integration of the expansion modules, including the industrial automation expansion module, into the web server software system is facilitated by the Internet protocol as a universal protocol.

32. (previously presented) The web server of claim 31, wherein the internet protocol comprises TCP/IP.

33. (previously presented) The web server of claim 31, wherein the internet protocol comprises HTTP and/or FTP.

34. (currently amended) The web server of claim 31 30, wherein the plurality of software expansion modules comprises a web page server (55), an XML parser (56), an industrial field bus access (57), a JAVA processor (59), a webcam processor (60), and an XML processor (64).

35. (new) The web server of claim 30, wherein the common interface protocol is an Application Programming Interface (API).

36. (new) The web server of claim 34, wherein the common interface protocol is an Application Programming Interface (API).

37. (new) The web server of claim 30, wherein the common interface protocol comprises Common Gateway Interface (CGI).

38. (new) The web server of claim 34, wherein the common interface protocol comprises Common Gateway Interface (CGI).

39. (new) The web server of claim 30, further comprising a non-real-time operating system installed on the web server computer, wherein the web server kernel is installed on the non-real-time operating system, and the second expansion module comprises both a process connection to the hardware component of the industrial automation system and a connection to an interface of the real-time operating system.